

October 10, 2011

Dear Citizens of Rowan County,

Last week, you read articles about discussions between the City of Salisbury and Rowan County regarding the subject of consolidating 911 services.

Several members of the City Council stated concerns over the County making demands and putting pressure and false deadlines on the Council for rushed decisions.

Attached is the letter sent to interim City Manager Doug Paris prior to the City Council meeting on October 4, 2011. I felt the letter needed to be published in order to give you, the citizens of Rowan County, a clearer picture of the County's position on consolidated services.

Thank you for your attention and patience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gary L. Page". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" being the most prominent.

Gary L. Page, Rowan County Manager



Rowan County Office of the Manager

130 West Innes Street • Salisbury, NC 28144

Telephone 704-216-8180

September 20, 2011

FAX 704-216-8195

Mr. Doug Paris, Interim City Manager
City of Salisbury
217 S. Main Street
PO Box 479
Salisbury, NC 28145-0479

Dear Mr. Paris,

Pursuant to our meeting on Monday, September 12th, the County is currently developing a schematic design for the construction of a new 911 Telecommunication Center on Old Concord Road. The estimated cost is \$1.3 million.

In an effort to properly plan for the future, County staff and I believe that we should upgrade the current design to include space for the City of Salisbury's telecommunications. The consolidation of staff into one facility, retaining split-management, would be beneficial to both government entities. Planning for additional space to accomplish consolidation would cost the County approximately another \$170,000. The county would not expect any compensation from the City, and our plans have been to pay for the new 911 Center from the proceeds of a new ¼ cent sales tax approved in a public referendum in November 2009.

Since we are only in the schematic design phase of the project, now is the time to determine the size of the facility. The County would appreciate an acknowledgement of interest within the next 30 days. Should you choose not to participate, we would move forward with our planning process.

In addition, I would like to share some thoughts on the possible future of 911 telecommunication services in Rowan County. Currently, the County dispatches all calls for police, fire, Rescue Squad and EMS for the municipalities and volunteer fire departments, except for the City of Salisbury Police Department. I would envision a time in the future when the City would desire to transfer the current staff of ten (10) telecommunicators and one (1) supervisor to the County. This would truly consolidate the service under one management entity, and save the City approximately \$400,000 annually. I realize this step would result in a sense of lost control, but we have a good working relationship with the other municipalities and I encourage you to contact them regarding their satisfaction with our service.

You might ask what does the county get out of this benevolence, if we consolidated. The County would be able to construct a back-up 911 Center (\$650,000) with 100% funding from the State 911 Fund. Should a catastrophic event occur to disable the 911 Center, we would have a fully equipped back-up to move to in order to resume service.

Equal Opportunity Employer



recycled paper

I would also envision a day in the future, when the City would negotiate the transfer of its interest in the Al's Knob Prime Site / Tower and FCC radio frequency Licenses to the County. Currently, the City is planning for prime site upgrades as required by Motorola due to equipment obsolescence after 2013. These costs will probably exceed \$4 million, and are to be paid from City tax dollars. Transferring this financial obligation to the County would save the City taxpayers thousands of dollars, not to mention the expense of on-going equipment maintenance costs.

I know the steps to consolidation that I've proposed would require several years of discussion to accomplish and that the issue of management was first settled in 1991. I would only point out, the 911 subscriber fee and ¼ cent sales tax were either new or didn't exist in 1991. Also, who would have envisioned the current recession period and the strain it's put on local government to make ends meet. Change is constant, and issues should be periodically revisited, especially after 20 years.

I would appreciate your consideration of our request within the next 30 days. If you have any questions concerning this letter, don't hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary L. Page". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" being the most prominent part.

Gary L. Page, County Manager